



1370 N. Water Street, Suite 3
P.O. Box 753
Platteville, WI 53818
p: 608.348.7110
e: swbadger@swbadger.org
www.swbadger.com

Full Council Meeting Minutes - October 14, 2016
USDA Service Center 26136 Executive Ln., Richland Center, WI 53581

Attendees Present: Board members; Crawford; Peter Flesch, Dennis Kirschbaum, Grant; Dale Hood, Geen; Betty Grotophorst, Iowa; Bill Grover, Richland; Mark Shepard, Gary Peters, Lafayette; Leon Wolfe, Sauk; Gene Hausner, Vernon; Adrian Amelse, **Staff members;** Executive Director, Wendy Warren; Invasive Species Coordinator, Don Barrette; Grazing Specialists Dennis Rooney and Robert Bauer, Stewardship Forester, Bandon Bleuer. **Guests in attendance;** None.

Meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Chair, Hausner

Agenda Additions/Approval: The agenda was approved as presented.

- Motion to approve agenda as presented by Wolfe, 2nd by Hood, motion passed.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from 2nd Qtr (July 8, 2016) meeting were reviewed.

- Motion to approve 4th Qtr minutes was made by Grover, seconded by Kirschbaum, motion passed.

Financials: Treasurer, Flesch presented the financial statement which reflected a somewhat large amount in receivables. Warren requested that members note their mileage on the sign in sheet in order to add that information to the in-kind totals. Warren noted the new grants that had been submitted included a Producer Led Watershed Grant, a NFWF grant in partnership with Valley Stewardship Network and Kickapoo Grazing Initiative, the Sustainable Forest Initiative, and the Urban Forestry Grant. She also noted that at least 4 grants that would be submitted over the next quarter included 2 Aquatic Invasive Species, 1 Clean Boats/Clean Waters (including several docks), and 1 Beginning farmer grant.

- Peters moved to accept the financial statement, Amelse seconded, motion passed.

Finance Committee Report: Gene Hausner reported that the Finance Committee had nominated a new Treasurer to fill the vacancy left by Grotophorst. Hausner and the other members thanked Grotophorst for her service. Warren discussed the Finance Committee's decision to support approval of a new 401-K plan for staff which would keep the fringe benefits within 20% and offer staff 3%. Warren noted that the Finance committee had reviewed a new budget format that only included overhead and administration and that the draft had not been adopted by Finance as of yet. The 2017 budget would be brought to the full council at its January meeting. Hausner checked in with members to ensure that the next Finance meeting would be held on Dec. 16 in Dodgeville to formalize the budget.

Executive Committee Report: Grover reported that the first item of business was to elect the new Treasurer, Pete Flesch to the slate of officers. He also noted that the committee had reviewed and adopted the fee schedule and asked for it to be brought to the full board. Members reviewed the fee schedule.

- **By consensus agreed to adopt it with the change from 20% added fee to a 20% discount to landowners in counties where their county had paid the full \$2500 fee.**

Warren discussed the income model created through the land lease arrangements being considered for a new project proposal.

- **Council requested that an income model through land lease arrangements proposal be presented to the Finance committee on December 16.**

Staff member Bauer asked the Council to consider the proposition of maintaining and renting out a no-till drill. Staff member Rooney noted that Great River Graziers received \$25/acre when theirs was rented. Shepard noted that SW Badger also owns a walnut huller that it could rent out. Hood noted that it is difficult to get the full value out of rental equipment arrangements. Staff member Bleuer noted that he had experience with equipment rental where the users were responsible for transportation. He also has clients that might like to use the no-till drill for prairie restoration.

- **Council requested Bauer to develop a proposal to present to the finance committee on December 16.**

Executive Directors Report:

Warren announced that she was very excited to have hired a new book keeper who was familiar with Quickbooks and non-profit management. Warren discussed the State Association RC&D development of a Memorandum of Agreement with the USDA NRCS that will officially place the RC&Ds on the NRCS planning agenda and to receive updates and other correspondence. Warren noted that her goal is for staff and herself to become well acquainted with the NRCS staff in each county in the upcoming year. She also noted that she is developing a slide show for the State Land and Water Conservation Association to be presented via webinar on Nov. 9 that will highlight the many benefits that RC&Ds can provide to counties. All other items that she had planned to discuss were already covered.

Guest Speaker Nicholas Bryant: Bauer introduced Nicholas Bryant as a current Veteran Beginning Farmer who wanted to talk about the benefits he has received by being involved with USDA and with Southwest Badger RC&D. He discussed his grass-fed poultry operation is on rented land although he is about to purchase a farm. He is excited about a proposal being developed by Bauer that would help veteran beginning farmers receive a free heifer and reduced rates on rented pasture. A Lafayette farmer has promised the first donation and suggests there are many more farmers and perhaps veteran owned businesses that would donate heifers to veterans. The program would provide a breed heifer to a veteran and the veteran could later give back a heifer to the program.

- **The council requested Bauer to present the proposal to the Finance Committee. Grover noted that this project was outside of the normal scope of work and should also go to the Programs Committee.**
- **Warren agreed to assemble and coordinate a meeting of the Finance and Programs Committee prior to the 4th Qtr meeting.**

Round Robin – County Updates

Crawford Co. – Pete Flesch announced that Cabella’s was being bought out by Bass Pro Shops. He also noted that Bass Pro generally sponsors local non-profit organizations that do conservation work.

Grant Co. – Dale Hood announced that Grant County would sponsor the Southern Area Tour for the Southern LC&Ds in 2017 and that Lynda Schwiekert would have her hands full. He surveyed the group to determine if people would like to see the UW Platteville Farm and everybody said yes.

Lafayette Co. – Leon Wolfe stated that their LCDs were heavily involved in trying to get educated on Karst features and trying to mitigate Karst generated sink holes. Also noted the County is trying to arrange for a cross section of private wells to be tested and documented. He noted that their Livestock siting ordinance passed but it is still being challenged.

Grant Co. – Betty Grotophorst reported that Green County included a Hydrologic Study in their budget to help in ensuring that a CAFO would be sited taking in all water considerations. She also noted there is a lot of activity and education going on with regard to cover crops. She invited the group to attend the viewing in Green Co. on October 25 titled “Defending our Family Farms”.

Richland Co. – Mark Shepard noted that he was glad to see the rekindling of a working relationship with NRCS. Gary Peters noted that a lot of work was being done to clean up and restore trails after the flooding that had recently occurred. These included Rock Bridge Park, snowmobile bridges, bike trails, Pine River foot bridges, log jams. He noted that the Friends of the Pine have a very active member, Mark ? who owns a canoe and kayak rental business on the Pine. Gary also reported that the exceptionally moist summer and moth infestations caused a 40% loss of his honeybee population. Finally, he noted that the Veteran Farmer Coalition had a Morgan rescue therapy program that people may be interested in checking out and donating to.

- Warren suggested that perhaps an Americorps crew could help with remaining clean up of forestlands and shorelands in 2017 and several members agreed that it should be considered. Warren will check out the application deadlines.

Adjournment: Hood moved to adjourn at 12:35 p.m. seconded by Grover, motion passed.